

Exchange With Reporters Following a Meeting With the House Republican Conference

July 26, 2002

Legislative Agenda

Q. How are you doing, Mr. President?

Q. Would you talk for a moment, please, sir?

Q. Mr. President, what did you tell the conference today?

The President. You know, it's been an amazing week. A lot has gotten done here in the Congress, and I want to thank both the Republicans and Democrats. I think—I know the American people expect their elected Representatives to work together to get some things done, get the homeland security bill. We're even going to get trade promotion authority, which will be good for jobs and American workers. We've got a corporate responsibility bill. It's a good piece of legislation, overwhelmingly supported by both Republicans and Democrats.

The American people saw last week that this administration and the Justice Department will track down those—prosecute those CEOs who break the law. We're making good progress here. I want to thank the Members of the House; I talked to them about how pleased I am with the progress we're making.

Q. What about prescription drugs on the Senate side, sir?

The President. Well, we'll see what comes out. [*Inaudible*—prescription drugs and Medicare. I've said that since I became the President, and we'll see what happens.

Right now I'm focused on the trade vote. We're going to get a free trade agreement, which is very important for jobs and workers, very important for our farmers and ranchers, and it's very important for our economy. We're going to get a good homeland security bill. And as you know, we've got a good corporate responsibility in a bipartisan bill.

So a lot has taken place here, and I'm real proud of the Members of both parties.

NOTE: The exchange began at 4:35 p.m. at the Capitol. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this exchange.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Legislation To Create a Department of Homeland Security

July 26, 2002

I commend the House of Representatives for acting quickly to pass landmark legislation to create a Homeland Security Department. This legislation represents the most extensive reorganization of the Federal Government since the 1940s. Our Nation needs a new department with the overriding mission of protecting the American people from the threats of terrorism.

This bill includes the major components of my proposal—providing for intelligence analysis and infrastructure protection, strengthening our borders, improving the use of science and technology to counter weapons of mass destruction, and enhancing our preparedness and response capabilities.

The House bill also provides the Secretary of Homeland Security managerial flexibility needed to build and maintain a department capable of responding rapidly to the terrorist threats of the 21st century.

The House has shown a strong commitment to improving the security of the American people, and I urge the Senators to do the same before they leave for the August recess.

Proclamation 7578—National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day, 2002

July 26, 2002

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Fifty-two years ago, armed forces from North Korea shattered the peace as they crossed the 38th Parallel and invaded South Korea. A 22-country force assembled to face this Cold War challenge, and the majority of them were Americans. The brave men and women of this coalition fought courageously to defend a population facing tyranny and aggression, and they succeeded in defeating the invading forces.

During the Korean War, approximately 1.8 million members of the United States Armed Forces fought in places such as Pork Chop Hill, Pusan Perimeter, and the Chosin Reservoir. During the intense fighting, approximately 34,000 American lives were lost in combat; 92,000 were wounded; and more than 8,000 listed as missing in action or taken prisoner. Their distinguished service reminds us of the words engraved on the Korean War Veterans Memorial in Washington—"Freedom Is Not Free."

As we face the challenges of a new era and a new war, we look to America's Korean War veterans for their example of dedication and sacrifice in defending freedom. These men and women faced a formidable adversary and endured harsh and bitter conditions in upholding our Nation's heritage of valor, tenacity, and honor during this important stand against Communist aggression. For their gallantry in action, 131 servicemen earned our Nation's highest military award, the Medal of Honor. More than 90 of them received the award posthumously.

Forty-nine years ago, the Military Armistice Agreement ended the fighting and stopped the spread of Communism in Korea. In order to thank and honor veterans of the Korean War and their families, America will commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Korean War through November 11, 2003. Today, as the Republic of Korea stands as a strong, democratic, and progressive nation, we thank our Korean War veterans for serving our Nation and the world with courage and distinction. These patriots advanced the principles and ideals upon which our Nation was founded, and they helped promote liberty, opportunity, and hope.

The Congress, by Public Law 104-19, as amended (36 U.S.C. 127), has designated July 27, 2002, as "National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day," and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this day.

Now, Therefore, I, George W. Bush, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 27, 2002, as National Korean War Veterans Armistice Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities that honor and give thanks to

our distinguished Korean War veterans. I also ask Federal departments and agencies and interested groups, organizations, and individuals to fly the flag of the United States at half-staff on July 27, 2002, in memory of the Americans who died as a result of their service in Korea.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of July, in the year of our Lord two thousand two, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-seventh.

George W. Bush

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., July 29, 2002]

NOTE: This proclamation will be published in the *Federal Register* on July 30.

Proclamation 7580—Parents' Day, 2002

July 26, 2002

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

Parenthood is a profound blessing, bringing with it responsibilities that are both challenging and rewarding. The care, dedication, and attention of parents are critical to their children's success. As they teach, guide, and nurture, parents help their children to realize their potential and achieve their dreams. Parents also play a critical role in shaping their children's character by sharing important life-lessons and values and showing them how to love and care for others.

As we face the challenges of a new era, families remain the foundation of our civil society; and parents are the cornerstone of strong families. This important responsibility often presents difficult problems and trying circumstances as parents balance competing demands such as making a living, raising their children, and participating in their communities.

Our Nation has made great progress in recognizing the importance of effective parenting, but there is still much to do. My Administration is committed to promoting a